Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05456 281846Z

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 AID-05 ABF-01 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-02 SP-02 /041 W

R 281710Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4114

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CONFIDENTIAL BEIRUT 5456

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF UNRWA XF SUBJECT: UNRWA FUNDING

REF: BEIRUT 5241 (NOTAL)

- 1. ACTING UNRWA COMGEN MCELHINEY INFORMED EMBOFF APR 28 THAT COMGEN RENNIE IS RETURNING TO BEIRUT FROM SAUDI ARABIA TODAY. MCELHINEY SAID COMGEN HAD AUDIENCE WITH KING KHALID, BUT THAT AGENCY DID NOT RPT NOT YET HAVE REPORT OF CONVERSATION. COMGEN, HOWEVER, REPORTEDLY DID NOT RPT NOT SEE SAG "FOREIGN MINISTER" DURING VISIT. (UNRWA HEADQUARTERS BEIRUT RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM UNDP OFFICE IN RIYADH THIS MORNING REPORTING THAT "FONMIN" HAD AGREED SEE COMGEN SHORTLY AFTER COMGEN'S PLANE WAS AIRBORNE APR 28.) MCELHINEY SAID, HOWEVER, THAT COMGEN WOULD BE PREPARED RETURN TO SAUDI ARABIA IF NECESSARY.
- 2. MCELHINEY ALSO INFORMED US THAT HE HAD RECEIVED FIRST WORD OF RESULTS OF APR 21 CAIRO FONMINS CONFERENCE CONSIDERATION OF UNRWA FINANCIAL PROBLEM FROM MEMBERS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 05456 281846Z

LEBANESE DEL TO CONFERENCE. HIS SOURCES CONFIRMED

MATTER WAS INDEED DISCUSSED IN CONFERENCE, BUT THAT FONMINS HAD THROWN PROBLEM BACK INTO AGENCY'S LAP, REPEATING FAMILIAR ARGUMENT THAT UNRWA FUNDING IS RESPONSIBILITY OF "INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY." MCELHINEY SAID HIS INFO THUS FAR WAS "SHAKY" AND THAT HE EXPECTED COMGEN WOULD HEAR OFFICIALY FROM ARAB LEAGUE SYG MAHMUD RIAD SOON. LIKEWISE, MCELHINEY NOTED THAT FAILURE OF ARAB LEAGUE FONMINS TO TAKE FORMAL DECISION TO INCREASE ARAB CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA DID NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY MEAN INDIVIDUAL ARAB STATES WOULD REFUSE TO UP THEIR ANTE. NEVERTHELESS, AT THIS TIME, SITUATION DOES NOT RPT NOT LOOK GOOD.

3. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE COMGEN WILL WISH ASSESS PROBABLE RESULTS HIS RIYADH VISIT AND RECEIVE OFFICIAL VERDICT FROM SYG RIAD BEFORE MAKING FINAL DECISION TO PROCEED WITH REDUCTIONS IN AGENCY'S SERVICES. WITH ORIGINAL MAY 1 DEALINE ONLY TWO DAYS AWAY, HOWEVER, COMGEN IS NOT RPT NOT LIKELY TO CONSIDER IT ADMINISTRATIVELY OR FINANCIALLY PRUDENT TO DELAY PLANNED REDUCTIONS FOR LONG UNLESS PROSPECTS FOR ADDITIONAL ARAB FUNDS BRIGHTEN SIGNIFICANTLY IN VERY NEAR FUTURE.

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